Serial No. 10/086,698
Art Unit 2638

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-14 (previously cancelled)

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (new)   A method for performing automatic recovery of a control plane network in an optical communications system, the method comprising:

detecting a failure in a control link between a first node and a neighbouring node;

at the first node, determining an alternate route to the neighbouring node;

at the first node, establishing an IP-in-IP tunnel to the neighbouring node based on the alternate route;

maintaining at the first node a forwarding redirection table; and

updating, at the first node, the forwarding redirection table to map forwarding interfaces leading to the neighbouring node via the IP-in-IP tunnel.

Claim 18 (new)   The method of claim 17 further comprising forwarding IP packets at the first node according to the forwarding redirection table.

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